

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention)

Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

25 – 26 March 2024, Vienna, Austria

SUMMARY REPORT

1. The Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention was held at the IAEA's Headquarters from 25 to 26 March 2024.

2. Sixty-four Contracting Parties participated in the Extraordinary Meeting, namely:

Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, EURATOM, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Korea (Republic of), Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zimbabwe.

3. Pursuant to Rule 42.4 of the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/602/Rev.7): "The President of the most recent Review Meeting shall act as President of the Extraordinary Meeting." Accordingly, Mr Hans Wanner acted as the President of this Extraordinary Meeting.

4. The Meeting was opened by the President who invited Mr Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to address the meeting where he welcomed all Contracting Parties and wished them success in the deliberations at the meeting. He emphasized the importance of the Safety Conventions in contributing to nuclear safety worldwide.

5. The provisional agenda for the Meeting, document JC/EM.5/02, had been distributed to the Contracting Parties and was adopted (see Annex 1).

6. The meeting examined the credentials of delegates and accepted the credentials thus far submitted and, in accordance with the established practice, allowed the delegates for whom proper credentials had not yet been received to participate in the work of the Meeting on the understanding that they would submit credentials in due form as soon as possible, preferably before the end of the meeting.

7. The President informed the Contracting Parties that, according to the Secretariat's records, there were no late ratifiers and that there was no request from Intergovernmental Organizations to attend this Extraordinary Meeting as observers.

8. The following seven proposals had been received prior to the meeting and discussed by the Contracting Parties at the Extraordinary Meeting.

- (a) JC/EM5/P01 Enhancing the Peer Review Process in Country Group Sessions in the Identification of Good Practices
- (b) JC/EM5/P02 Country Group Officer's Training on Recognizing Good Practices
- (c) JC/EM5/P03 Discussion of Good Practices in the General Committee and the Closing Plenary Session
- (d) JC/EM5/P04 Guidance on addressing Good Practices and Areas of Good Performance in National Reports
- (e) JC/EM5/P05 Development of Awarded Good Practices Database
- (f) JC/EM5/P06 Improving the procedural mechanism for assigning Contracting Parties to Country Groups
- (g) JC/EM5/P07 Proposal for change in point 39 of INFCIRC/603/Rev.9 and definition of Good Practices

9. No other proposals were submitted by Contracting Parties at the meeting. Following discussion, proposals JC/EM5/P01, JC/EM5/P02, JC/EM5/P03, JC/EM5/P04 and JC/EM5/P05 were adopted with modifications. The modified proposals and the changes to the relevant guidance documents are included as annexes.

10. Regarding specific parts of proposals JC/EM5/P02 and JC/EM5/P05, the requests to the Secretariat would be subject to the availability of resources (financial and human) and their technical feasibility.

11. Proposal JC/EM5/P06 was discussed but no consensus was achieved.

12. Proposal JC/EM5/P07 was withdrawn.

13. The meeting agreed that the Secretariat will undertake an editorial and consistency check of the Information Circular Documents 602, 603 and 604 on the basis of the proposals JC/EM5/P01 to JC/EM5/P05 adopted in this meeting. The Information Circular Documents 603 and 604 in track change mode in English will then be uploaded to the JC secure website by 17 June 2024 for consideration by Contracting Parties. Should no objections be received by 16 September 2024 from Contracting Parties, these will be translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish, and made available on the Joint Convention secure and public website.

14. There were no matters raised under agenda item 6.

15. The draft Summary Report was discussed by the Contracting Parties on 26 March 2024 and amended as necessary.

16. The final Summary Report of the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting, document JC/EM.5/07/Rev1, was approved by consensus of the Contracting Parties and made available to the public pursuant to Article 34 of the Joint Convention. The Contracting Parties further examined a draft version of the President's Report and provided suggestions for amendment.

List of Annexes

1. Agenda of the Meeting
2. Modified proposals:
 - JC/EM5/P01 Enhancing the Peer Review Process in Country Group Sessions in the Identification of Good Practices
 - JC/EM5/P02 Country Group Officer's Training on Recognizing Good Practices
 - JC/EM5/P03 Discussion of Good Practices in the General Committee and the Closing Plenary Session
 - JC/EM5/P04 Guidance on addressing Good Practices and Areas of Good Performance in National Reports
 - JC/EM5/P05 Development of Awarded Good Practices Database
3. Draft INFCIRC/603/Rev.10 Guidelines regarding the Review Process, as agreed at the Meeting.
4. Draft INFCIRC/604/Rev.5 Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports, as agreed at the Meeting.

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

**Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management
and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management**

Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

25–26 March 2024, Vienna, Austria

Board Room B/M1, M Building, Vienna International Centre

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Credentials of delegates
4. Potential changes to the guidelines of the Joint Convention to achieve the uniform identification of Good Practices
5. Consideration of any other proposals made by Contracting Parties
6. Any other business
7. Discussion and adoption of the Summary Report
8. Examination of the President's Report
9. Closing of the meeting

**Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of
Radioactive Waste Management**

Proposal to the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

1. Proposal No:

JC/EM5/P01

2. Title:

Enhancing the Peer Review Process in Country Group Sessions in the Identification of Good Practices

3. Proposed by:

United States of America (USA)

4. Contact for proposal:

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5. Date submitted:

February 23, 2024

6. Background and Rationale of the Proposal

As explained in the Joint Convention's *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* (INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, Annex 2) (Guidelines), a "Good Practice" is "a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting

Party but has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs.” It has become apparent over a number of Joint Convention review cycles, however, that the identification and application of Good Practices needs to be improved to achieve greater consistency and uniformity.

During the Seventh Review Meeting in 2022, for example, the President and several Contracting Parties expressed concern regarding the uniform use of Good Practices across Country Groups. The Summary Report for the Seventh Review Meeting (para. 63) concluded that “[w]ith regard to the application of Good Practices, ... there was a general sense that this was not performed uniformly across the Country Groups. The Contracting Parties identified the need to undertake further discussions.”

The President's Report for the Seventh Review Meeting also stated, "(101) Within the different Country Groups, there have been inconsistent approaches in identifying and recognizing Good Practices to the relevant Contracting Parties under review. Therefore, a disparity emerged across the Country Groups with regard to the results of the peer review. The Chairs of the Country Groups as well as the Presidency advise to discourage the self-identification of Good Practices. The identification of Good Practices should solely be undertaken by the peer Contracting Parties in the Country Groups and not by the Contracting Party under review. Thus, in the future, a stricter application of Good Practices, driven by the Country Group Chairs, is recommended."

At the Seventh Review Meeting, a total of 13 Good Practices were identified in the Country Group sessions. Across the Country Groups, the identification of Good Practices ranged from as few as zero Good Practices in one Country Group to as many as 4 Good Practices in another Country Group, including 3 Good Practices for a single Contracting Party in that same Country Group.

To summarize the existing process for identifying Good Practices at the Review Meeting, currently Good Practices are awarded for a Contracting Party by the applicable Country Group during the review session for that Contracting Party, based on discussion and agreement of the Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group following the Contracting Party's national presentation. Thus, determining whether an activity of a Contracting Party constitutes a Good Practice has varied quite a bit across Country Groups, with some Country Groups appearing to award Good Practices less stringently and with less of a supporting basis than other Country Groups in deciding whether to award a Good Practice for a Contracting Party.

Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to enhance the peer review process beginning at the Eighth Review Meeting by improving the consistency of the identification of Good Practices in the Country Group review sessions. The proposal seeks to emphasize strict and consistent application of all of the elements of Good Practice. This proposal also seeks to help achieve that objective by clarifying the guidance for Country Group Officers. It includes guidance for the Country Group Chairperson on facilitating the Country Group's robust and candid discussion and determining the group's consensus in the identification of Good Practices, in particular by ensuring (1) that a potential Good Practice is proposed by a Country Group member other than the Contracting Party under review, (2) that Country Group members fully discuss how a potential Good Practice satisfies all of the elements of Good Practice, and (3) that a proposed Good Practice has the support of a majority of the Country Group members prior to agreement by the Country Group to recognize a Contracting Party's activity as a Good Practice. In addition, the proposal includes some additional guidance for the Rapporteur's report in documenting the Country Group's identification of Good Practices.

7. Proposal (including new wording if applicable)

Based on the information above, it is proposed that INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management*,

Guidelines regarding the Review Process, would be revised in the following ways in advance of the Eighth Review Meeting.

[Excerpts from *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* are below, in order as they appear in the Guidelines, with proposed edits shown in Track Changes:]

VII. Duties of a Contracting Party as a Member of a Country Group

52. As a member of a Country Group, a Contracting Party should:

- (a) study in detail the National Reports of all other members of its group, bearing in mind the terms Suggestion, Area of Good Performance, and Good Practice, as described in Annex 2, and considering their applicability to the practices, policies, and programs discussed in a Contracting Party's National Report;
- (b) inform other Contracting Parties in the Country Group, both directly through the identified National Contacts, and through the relevant group Co-ordinator, of any questions and comments arising from its review of the National Reports; and
- (c) during Country Group sessions, participate in an in-depth discussion of the National Report of each member of the group.

VIII. Guidance to Officers on how to Conduct a Country Group Session

58. Review Meeting officers should convene, together with the Secretariat staff members who will be participating in the Review Meeting, for two days immediately preceding the start of the Review Meeting. On the first of these two days, agreement should be reached on subjects such as the structure and content of the Rapporteurs' session reports, the application of the terms Good Practice and Area of Good Performance as described in Annex 2, the timing of sessions, how the General Committee will interact with Country Groups, the format of Rapporteurs' written and oral reports to the closing plenary session, etc. The second day should be devoted to separate meetings of each set of Country Group officers, together with the Secretariat member who will be assisting the group. During these meetings, each group of officers should discuss the Co-ordinator's analysis in some detail, since this analysis identifies and summarizes the questions and comments on each Convention article, and the main issues emerging from those. The officers will also receive copies of the Rapporteurs' written reports from the previous Review Meeting, for the Contracting Parties that are in the Country Group. These written reports should be studied for any item on which follow-up was recommended. The officers should also discuss their intended method of operation during the Review Meeting.

60. (a) During the presentation and subsequent discussion in the Country Group, the officers should use the abbreviated listing as a checklist for items to be discussed. If any item has not been mentioned, the Chairperson should make a point of raising it before closing the session.

(b) The Chairperson should also endeavor to facilitate robust and candid discussion in the Country Group regarding any proposed Good Practice, including (1) encouraging a candid and thorough discussion among the Country Group members regarding how a proposed Good Practice satisfies all the elements of a Good Practice, and (2) determining for each proposed Good Practice that there is support within the Country Group.

(c) If necessary, the Chairperson should proactively encourage each member of the Country Group to participate in the discussion, especially of difficult items. By following this systematic approach, the Chairperson can ensure that the Country Group deals comprehensively with each National Report and presentation, and by use of teamwork, the workload involved can be distributed in a reasonable way between the officers of the Country Group.

ANNEX 1

Duties and Qualifications of Officers for a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention

II.5. Rapporteur

- (a) To be familiar with the National Reports to be presented in his/her Country Group and the relevant Co-ordinator's report;
- (b) To record the essentials of the discussion of each of the National Reports in his/her Country Group sessions;
- (c) To identify topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions and Challenges;
- (new paragraph) To identify practices, policies, and programs that are agreed by the Country Group to be Good Practices and the specific reasons that demonstrate how such practices, policies, and programs satisfy all of the elements of a Good Practice;
- (d) To highlight topics and issues that may be identified by the Country Group as overarching issues;
- (e) To identify topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be areas where followup at a subsequent Review Meeting would be desirable;
- (f) To produce a draft session report after each national presentation, summarizing the above items;
- (g) To revise the draft session report after discussions in the Country Group and to provide the resulting session report to the Review Meeting President and to the Secretariat within one half day of the close of the session;
- (h) To produce and make available to the Contracting Parties, a written report that consolidates the session reports for each National Report presented in the Country Group, and represents a summary of the discussions that took place in the Country Group during the Review Meeting, any decisions reached by the Country Group including any Good Practices recognized by the Contracting Parties and the bases thereof, any conclusions, and a summary of the overarching issues identified by the Country Group, and to present an oral report in the plenary that summarizes the overarching issues; and
- (i) To produce the above reports in accordance with the format, timing, and other details as directed by the General Committee.

8. Joint Convention Document to be amended

INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Review Process*

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Proposal to the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

1. Proposal No:

JC/EM5/P02

2. Title:

Country Group Officer's Training on Recognizing Good Practices

3. Proposed by:

United States of America (USA)

4. Contact for proposal:

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5. Date submitted:

February 23, 2024

6. Background and Rationale of the Proposal

After being elected, Country Group Officers attend a “Workshop of Incoming and Outgoing Officers.” This training workshop includes multiple sessions, including Organizational Status for the Review Meeting, Provisional Agenda of the Review Meeting, Roles and Responsibilities of Officers, and Conduct of a Country Group Session. The purpose of this workshop is to ensure that all officers have an understanding of the processes associated with conducting the Review Meeting and ensure consistent implementation of the policies and procedures throughout the meeting. This training includes outgoing officers providing advice and instruction to the incoming officers for the

next review cycle.

It has become apparent over a number of past Joint Convention review cycles that the identification and application of Good Practices needs to be improved to achieve greater consistency and uniformity. For example, the Seventh Review Meeting Summary Report (para. 63) concluded that “[w]ith regard to the application of Good Practices, ... there was a general sense that this was not performed uniformly across the Country Groups. The Contracting Parties identified the need to undertake further discussions.”¹ Furthermore, the President's Report also stated, "(101) Within the different Country Groups, there have been inconsistent approaches in identifying and recognizing Good Practices to the relevant Contracting Parties under review. Therefore, a disparity emerged across the Country Groups with regard to the results of the peer review. The Chairs of the Country Groups as well as the Presidency advise to discourage the self-identification of Good Practices. The identification of Good Practices should solely be undertaken by the peer Contracting Parties in the Country Groups and not by the Contracting Party under review. Thus, in the future, a stricter application of Good Practices, driven by the Country Group Chairs, is recommended."²

7. Proposal (including new wording if applicable)

To ensure uniform application of the elements of a Good Practice, training would be provided at the “Workshop of Incoming and Outgoing Officers.”

INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Review Process notes one of the duties of the Country Group Chair is to “[t]o promote and stimulate discussion of relevant issues in the Country Group meeting.” Therefore, this training would be most beneficial to the Chair and the Vice-Chair (should he/she have to act as the Chair) to help ensure consistent recognition of Good Practices throughout the Country Group review sessions. Specifically, this training would include examples of potential Good Practices and how to apply the elements of a Good Practices in the Country Group review session before the Contracting Parties decide whether to recognize a practice, policy, or program as a Good Practice.

In addition, the training would include a mock session on considering a potential Good Practice and assist the officers in ensuring a robust discussion on whether a practice, policy, or program satisfies the elements of a Good Practice and thus qualifies for recognition as a Good Practice, while keeping the discussion within a reasonable amount of time. At the start of the Country Group review sessions, trained officers would share relevant guidance from the training to the Contracting Parties, who are responsible for considering potential Good Practices in the Country Group review session and then deciding whether to recognize them as Good Practices. It is important to note the role of the officers in the identification process of the Good Practices is to facilitate thorough and candid discussions, but not to intervene in the Contracting Parties’ decision-making process.

Further, subject to available resources and within its mandate, the Secretariat will facilitate the request by Contracting Parties for training (e.g. video etc.), on identifying Good Practices similar to the training above as well facilitate holding a separate hybrid training (e.g., webinar) on Good Practices and the application of all of the elements of Good Practice. This training/webinar is intended for National Contacts, but anyone else who is interested and involved with the Joint Convention in their countries is welcome to participate.

The template for the Rapporteur’s Report would include the elements that satisfy a Good Practice in order to help facilitate the Contracting Parties’ discussion and recognition of Good Practices in the Country Group review session. For example:

¹ Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties Final Summary Report, July 2022.

² Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties Final President’s Report, July 2022.

Country A – Good Practices

- Definition (INFCIRC/603/Rev.7, Annex 2):

A Good Practice is a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs.

- ☐ New or revised,
- ☐ Significant contribution to safety,
- ☐ Tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but not widely implemented, and
- ☐ Applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs

JC #RM – CGN – Date

Based on the information above, it is proposed that INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Review Process*, would be revised in the following ways in advance of the Eighth Review Meeting:

26. Following the Organizational Meeting, a workshop of incoming and outgoing officers shall be held to describe the Review Meeting process in detail, including but not limited to, key documents, identification of good practices and to share experience and lessons learned. The National Contacts, as described in Annex 1, shall be invited to participate, if they consider it appropriate, in this meeting.

8. Joint Convention Document to be amended

INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management*

**Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of
Radioactive Waste Management**

Proposal to the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

1. Proposal No:

JC/EM5/P03

2. Title: Discussion of Good Practices in the General Committee and the Closing Plenary Session

3. Proposed by:

United States of America (USA)

4. Contact for proposal:

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Co-Sponsors

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5. Date submitted:

February 23, 2024

6. Background and Rationale of the Proposal

It has become apparent over a number of Joint Convention review cycles that the identification and application of Good Practice, as described in the Joint Convention's *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* (INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, Annex 2) (Guidelines),¹ needs to be improved to achieve greater consistency and uniformity in the peer review process.

During the Seventh Review Meeting in 2022, for example, the President and several Contracting Parties expressed concern regarding the uniform use of Good Practices across Country Groups. The Summary Report for the Seventh Review Meeting (para. 63) concluded that “[w]ith regard to the application of Good Practices, ... there was a general sense that this was not performed uniformly across the Country Groups. The Contracting Parties identified the need to undertake further discussions.” The President's Report for the Seventh Review Meeting also stated, “(101) Within the different Country Groups, there have been inconsistent approaches in identifying and recognizing

¹ A Good Practice is “a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs.”

Good Practices to the relevant Contracting Parties under review. Therefore, a disparity emerged across the Country Groups with regard to the results of the peer review."

At the Seventh Review Meeting, a total of 13 Good Practices were identified in the Country Group sessions. Across the Country Groups, the identification of Good Practices ranged from as few as zero Good Practices in one Country Group to as many as 4 Good Practices in another Country Group, including 3 Good Practices for a single Contracting Party in that same Country Group.

To summarize the existing process for identifying Good Practices at the Review Meeting, currently Good Practices are awarded for a Contracting Party by the applicable Country Group during the review session for that Contracting Party, based on discussion and agreement of the Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group following the Contracting Party's national presentation. Thus, determining whether an activity of a Contracting Party constitutes a Good Practice has varied quite a bit across Country Groups, with some Country Groups appearing to award Good Practices less stringently and with less of a supporting basis than other Country Groups in deciding whether to award a Good Practice for a Contracting Party.

Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to achieve greater consistency and uniformity, as well as broader consensus among the Contracting Parties, in the identification of Good Practices, beginning at the Eighth Review Meeting. The proposal seeks to do so through a process that would involve the Country Group Chairs reporting to the General Committee² on the identification of Good Practices in their respective Country Groups, including the basis on which the Country Group determined that the Good Practices meet all the elements of a Good Practice. (This could take place, for example, in the daily meetings of the General Committee that typically occur during the first week of the Review Meeting or according to whatever schedule and manner the General Committee decides is appropriate.) In addition, the proposed process would involve a written report from the General Committee, to be made available to Contracting Parties prior to the closing plenary session, on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups. The President, or another member of the General Committee as designated by the President, would also provide a similar oral report on Good Practices to the Contracting Parties in the closing plenary session for discussion and agreement by all Contracting Parties as to which Good Practices to include in the Review Meeting summary report.

7. Proposal (including new wording if applicable)

Based on the information above, it is proposed that INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Review Process*, would be revised in the following ways in advance of the Eighth Review Meeting.

[Excerpts from *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* are below, in order as they appear in the Guidelines, with proposed edits shown in Track Changes:]

IV.2. Closing Plenary Session

29. (a) One day prior to the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting, the Rapporteur for each Country Group will make available to all Contracting Parties a Rapporteur's written report that takes account of the views expressed in the discussion on each National Report in that group, includes Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions, Challenges (see Annex 2) and points of agreement and disagreement, and summarizes the overarching issues identified by that Country Group;

(b) One day prior to the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting, the President will make available to all Contracting Parties a written report on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups, including the basis on which they were found by the Country Groups to meet all the elements

² The General Committee is composed of the President of the Review Meeting, the two Vice-Presidents of the Review Meeting, and the Country Group Chairs, per Rule 16 of the Joint Convention's *Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules* (INFCIRC/602/Rev.7).

of a Good Practice.

(c) In the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting:

- i. for each Country Group in turn, the relevant group Rapporteur will make a brief and concise oral report that summarizes the overarching issues identified by the group and draws out these issues for discussion in the plenary session;
- ii. each Contracting Party will have an opportunity to respond to the questions raised and/or comments made on its National Report;
- iii. there will be an opportunity for all Contracting Parties to comment on any National Report and on the Rapporteurs' written and oral reports;

(new paragraph). the President, will make a brief and concise oral report to Contracting Parties that introduces the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups and the basis on which they were found by the Country Groups to satisfy all the elements of a Good Practice;

- iv. there will be a thorough and candid discussion of the overarching issues identified in the Country Group Rapporteurs' written and oral reports; this should be followed by a discussion of the status of world-wide safety of spent fuel management and world-wide safety of radioactive waste management;
- v. suggestions concerning changes to any of the Convention's documents or procedures will be discussed;
- vi. the date for the following Review Meeting, and the related schedule of deadlines, will be discussed and agreed;
- vii. the meeting summary report will be discussed and approved by consensus of the Contracting Parties; and
- viii. the President's report will be tabled.

VIII. Guidance to Officers on how to Conduct a Country Group Session

58. Review Meeting officers should convene, together with the Secretariat staff members who will be participating in the Review Meeting, for two days immediately preceding the start of the Review Meeting. On the first of these two days, agreement should be reached on subjects such as the structure and content of the Rapporteurs' session reports, the timing of sessions, how the General Committee will interact with Country Groups, how Country Group Chairs will report the Good Practices recognized by their respective Country Groups to the General Committee, how the General Committee will report to Contracting Parties at the closing plenary session on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups, the format of Rapporteurs' written and oral reports to the closing plenary session, etc. The second day should be devoted to separate meetings of each set of Country Group officers, together with the Secretariat member who will be assisting the group. During these meetings, each group of officers should discuss the Co-ordinator's analysis in some detail, since this analysis identifies and summarizes the questions and comments on each Convention article, and the main issues emerging from those. The officers will also receive copies of the Rapporteurs' written reports from the previous Review Meeting, for the Contracting Parties that are in the Country Group. These written reports should be studied for any item on which follow-up was recommended. The officers should also discuss their intended method of operation during the Review Meeting.

II. Duties of Officers

II.1. President

(a) To preside over plenary sessions of the Review Meeting;

(b) To preside over meetings of the General Committee;

(new paragraph) To produce and make available to the Contracting Parties a written report that consolidates the Good Practices recognized in the Country Groups and identifies the basis on which they were found by the Country Groups to meet all the elements of a Good Practice, and to present an oral report in the closing plenary session that summarizes the written report;

(c) To generally direct and oversee the review process, and the functioning of the Review Meeting;

(d) To represent the Review Meeting to the media as appropriate;

(e) To prepare a draft summary report of the Review Meeting and a President's report on the Review Meeting; and

(f) To direct the business of the General Committee in the period after the Review Meeting until the following Organizational Meeting.

II.3. Country Group Chair

(a) To chair and generally manage the meetings of a Country Group;

(b) To promote and stimulate discussion of relevant issues in the Country Group meeting;

(c) To study the National Reports of his/her Country Group, in advance of their presentation;

(d) To be familiar with the main issues arising from the questions and answers on each of the National Reports to be considered in his/her Country Group;

(e) To support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Rapporteur's reports;

(f) To participate in meetings of the General Committee;

(g) To implement in his/her Country Group the decisions of the General Committee; and

(h) To report to the General Committee on the progress in the Country Group, on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Group including the basis on which each one was found to satisfy all the elements of a Good Practice, and on any organizational issues arising in connection with the Country Group.

8. Joint Convention Document to be amended

INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Review Process

**Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of
Radioactive Waste Management**

Proposal to the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

1. Proposal No:

JC/EM5/P04

2. Title:

Guidance on addressing Good Practices and Areas of Good Performance in National Reports

3. Proposed by:

United States of America (USA)

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5. Date submitted:

February 23, 2024

6. Background and Rationale of the Proposal

As explained in the Joint Convention's *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* (INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, Annex 2), a Good Practice is "a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs." It has become apparent over a number of Joint Convention review cycles, however, that the identification and application of Good Practices needs to be improved to achieve greater consistency and uniformity.

During the Seventh Review Meeting in 2022, for example, the President and several Contracting Parties expressed concern regarding the uniform use of Good Practices across Country Groups. The Summary Report for the Seventh Review Meeting (para. 63) concluded that "[w]ith regard to the application of Good Practices, ... there was a general sense that this was not performed uniformly across the Country Groups. The Contracting Parties identified the need to undertake further discussions." The President's Report for the Seventh Review Meeting also stated, "(101) Within the different Country Groups, there have been inconsistent approaches in identifying and recognizing Good Practices to the relevant Contracting Parties under review. Therefore, a disparity emerged across the Country Groups with regard to the results of the peer review."

In addition to Good Practices, the *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* also provide for recognizing Areas of Good Performance as another option to acknowledge Contracting Parties' significant improvements to safety that do not satisfy the elements of a Good Practice. An Area of Good Performance is "a new or enhanced practice, policy or programme that is recognized as an improvement of safety and is being implemented. An Area of Good Performance is a significant accomplishment for that Contracting Party, although it may have been undertaken by other Contracting Parties."¹

Although the concepts of Good Practice and Area of Good Performance are identified and described in the Joint Convention's *Guidelines regarding the Review Process*, the Joint Convention's *Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports* (INFCIRC/604/Rev.4) do not address either concept. Currently, there is no guidance as to whether or how a Contracting Party should identify or indicate in its National Report that any of its activities be considered for recognition as a Good Practice or Area of Good Performance by other Contracting Parties. As a result, there is inconsistency in the extent to which Contracting Parties address, if at all, Areas of Good Performance and Good Practices in their National Reports. This, in turn, likely contributes to inconsistency in the Country Groups in the identification and acknowledgment of such safety achievements at the Review Meetings.

We note that the President's Report (para. 101) "advise[d] to discourage the self-identification of Good Practices," and we took that suggestion into account for this proposal. However, given that Contracting Parties have the most knowledge about their own practices, policies, and programs, and the basis as to why a particular practice, policy, or program may satisfy all the elements of Good Practice, we determined that a practical approach may be to provide guidance on how the self-identification of potential Good Practices, as well as Areas of Good Performance, should be addressed in the National Report.

Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to provide guidance to Contracting Parties regarding how to address in their National Reports their practices, policies, or programs, if any, that they may wish to identify as an Area of Good Performance or a potential Good Practice for other Contracting Parties' consideration. Providing guidance for how these topics are addressed in National Reports will help to achieve greater consistency and uniformity in how Good Practices and Areas of Good Performance are recognized at the Review Meetings. Because achieving greater consistency in the identification of Good Practices has been a particular area of concern for Contracting Parties, this

¹ INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, Annex 2.

proposal includes a provision that would have Contracting Parties identify the specific basis for which they think a practice, policy, or program satisfies all the elements of Good Practice for consideration by other Contracting Parties.

It is proposed that this change be implemented for the Eighth Review Meeting. We realize that National Reports are under preparation for the Eighth Review Meeting; however, if adopted, we think this proposal would require a relatively small amount of adjustment in National Reports and therefore we are proposing that it be implemented in this review cycle.

7. Proposal (including new wording if applicable)

Based on the information above, it is proposed that INFCIRC/604/Rev.4, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports*, would be revised in the following ways in advance of the Eighth Review Meeting.

[Excerpts from *Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports* are below, in order as they appear in the Guidelines, with proposed edits shown in Track Changes:]

III. Suggested Form and Structure of the National Report

Section A. Introduction

14. This section should consist of a general introductory remarks, survey of the main safety issues and main themes of the report and references to any matters not covered elsewhere in the report that the Contracting Parties wishes to raise. This section should also include a brief summary of matters discussed in Section K, such as Suggestions, Challenges, Areas of Good Performance, and Proposed Good Practices.

Section K. General Efforts to Improve Safety

33. This section provides an opportunity to give a summary of safety issues of concern identified earlier and of planned future actions to address those issues, including, where appropriate, measures of international co-operation.

34. This section should also summarize

(a) measures taken to address Suggestions and Challenges identified at previous Review Meetings; ~~and~~

(b) strong features in its current practices, policies, and programs, including Areas of Good Performance that the Contracting Party has identified for itself, possible areas for improvement, major Challenges that the Contracting Party has identified for itself and how the Contracting Party plans to address these issues-; and

(c) any practice, policy, or program that the Contracting Party proposes for consideration by the Country Group for recognition by the Country Group as a Good Practice and the specific reasons that demonstrate how the practice, policy, or program satisfies all the elements of a Good Practice and qualifies for recognition by the Country Group as a Good Practice.

8. Joint Convention Document to be amended

INFCIRC/604/Rev.4, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports*

**Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive
Waste Management**

Proposal to the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

1. Proposal No:

JC/EM5/P05

2. Title:

Development of Awarded Good Practices Database

3. Proposed by:

United States of America (USA)

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5. Date submitted:

February 23, 2024

6. Background and Rationale of the Proposal

During the peer review process at the Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, Contracting Parties are assigned to Country Groups. As Country Group members, Contracting Parties participate in robust and candid discussions with other Country Group members in a constructive manner in order to identify findings such as Good Practices.

INFCIRC/603/Rev.9, *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Guidelines regarding the Review Process*, explains that a Good Practice is “a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but *has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties* [emphasis added]; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs.” This approach was applied for the first time in the Fifth Review Meeting.

Determination of whether a proposed Good Practice “has not been widely implemented” is generally based on the individual experience and knowledge of the Country Group members. A Contracting Party member may be new to the Joint Convention peer review process and may only be aware of the practices, policies and programs within their country and, therefore, may not know whether a proposed Good Practice is unique and not widely implemented by other Contracting Parties in their Country Group or the other Country Groups.

7. Proposal (including new wording if applicable)

To adhere to the principle of a Good Practice which “has not been widely implemented” (e.g., a practice, policy, or program not generally observed elsewhere), we propose to develop a database of previous Good Practices (beginning from the Fifth Review Meeting) which would be accessible to all Contracting Parties via the IAEA Joint Convention secure website.

This database would be searchable and cross-indexed with the Country Group Rapporteur Report where the Good Practice was noted. At a minimum, this database would include fields such as the description of the Good Practice, Awarded Contracting Party, Review Cycle, and the specific topic of the Good Practice such as Radioactive Waste, Disused Sealed Source, Decommissioning and Spent Fuel.

The database would organize existing data, aid Contracting Parties when considering nominating a practice, policy, or program as a Good Practice, as well as a tool that the Country Group members could use in their determination of whether a proposed Good Practice is innovative during the peer review session. Also, this database could be used by a Contracting Party to compare its program with other similar sized programs for benchmarking purposes. This database would be very useful to new Contracting Parties in identifying Good Practices applicable to their particular circumstance. In the future, to enhance the utility of this database, the Contracting Parties could also use this database to periodically perform evaluations of the data and summarize the results in topical reviews that discuss innovative practices, policies, and programs being used by the Contracting Parties. In the reviewing of the National Reports to generate comments and questions on the Contracting Party’s program, the database would be available as an aid during this period.

If this proposal achieves consensus, the IAEA would within 6 months of the closing of the Fifth Extraordinary Meeting, develop this database and complete and distribute the database one month before the Eighth Review Meeting begins. The database would be updated with the results from subsequent Review Meetings.

8. Joint Convention Document to be amended

N/A

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Guidelines regarding the Review Process

1. The “Guidelines regarding the Review Process” adopted at the Preparatory Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention held from 10 to 12 December 2001 were modified at
 - (i) the First Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 3 to 14 November 2003,
 - (ii) the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held on 7 November 2005,
 - (iii) the Second Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 15 to 24 May 2006,
 - (iv) the Third Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 11 to 20 May 2009,
 - (v) the Fourth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 14 to 23 May 2012,
 - (vi) the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 12 to 13 May 2014,
 - (vii) the Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 16 to 17 May 2017,
 - (viii) the Fourth Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 4-6 May 2022, and
 - (ix) the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 27 June to 8 July 2022.
2. The modified “Guidelines regarding the Review Process” are set forth in the Attachment hereto.

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Guidelines regarding the Review Process

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Duties and Qualifications of Officers for a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention

- I. Background
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Common Understanding of the Terms “Good Practice”, “Area of Good Performance”, “Suggestion”, and “Challenge”

- I. Good Practice
- II. Area of Good Performance
- III. Suggestion
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I. Introduction

1. These guidelines, established by the Contracting Parties under Article 29 of the Convention, are intended to be read in conjunction with the text of the Convention for the purpose of providing guidance to Contracting Parties on the process for reviewing National Reports submitted under Article 32, in order to facilitate the efficient review of the Contracting Parties' implementation of their obligations under the Convention.
2. The aim of the review process is to examine National Reports thoroughly, so that Contracting Parties can learn from each other's solutions to common and individual safety problems concerning spent fuel management and radioactive waste management and, above all, contribute to achieving and maintaining a high level of safety worldwide through a constructive exchange of views. The success of the review process is dependent on the commitment of each and every Contracting Party (1) to take a critical look at its national program and report issues and potential issues in a frank and candid manner, and (2) to ask each other difficult and sometimes challenging questions. A time chart of the steps leading up to a Review Meeting is given in Table 1.

II. Background

3. Recognizing that reviews of National Reports at periodic meetings under Article 30 of the Convention could be accomplished more efficiently through the establishment of subgroups, the Contracting Parties have decided to establish Country Groups for each Review Meeting. Each group will consider in detail the National Report of each member of that group, discussing all the subject areas covered by the reports.
4. An Organizational Meeting held prior to a Review Meeting may decide whether it is appropriate to organize topical sessions at the Review Meeting to address more specifically particular subjects that may not be adequately considered within the Country Group arrangements.

III. Organizational Meeting and Nomination of Officers

5. Approximately twelve months before each Review Meeting, an Organizational Meeting will be held to allocate Contracting Parties to Country Groups (see Section V), elect the Review Meeting President and Vice-Presidents, and select Country Group Co-ordinators, Rapporteurs, Chairpersons, and Vice-Chairpersons.
6. In advance of the Organizational Meeting, the Secretariat shall circulate to the Contracting Parties a background information brochure containing guidance such as introducing the Joint Convention and its associated Rules of Procedure and Guidelines.

III.1. Nomination of the President and Vice-President

7. Not later than three months before the Organizational Meeting, the Secretariat will request Contracting Parties to submit in writing the name of any individual that the Contracting Party is nominating for election to the position of President or Vice-President. Not later than two months before the Organizational Meeting, as part of such nomination, a Contracting Party shall provide, in writing, relevant biographical information on the candidate, the qualifications of the candidate, the issues that should be addressed by the Contracting Parties during the next three years and the position of the

candidate on those issues. The Secretariat will circulate the names of candidates for the position of President or Vice-Presidents and materials supporting their candidacy to all Contracting Parties at least one month before the Organizational Meeting.

8. Contracting Parties will endeavour to reach consensus on the President and Vice-Presidents from the candidates nominated in accordance with Paragraph 7.

9. Each candidate for the elective places, or their representative, shall have the opportunity to make a short oral presentation to the Contracting Parties at the Organizational Meeting that addresses the items in the material supporting their candidacy and shall answer questions from the Contracting Parties.

III.2. Nomination of Other Officers

10. The Secretariat will, not later than three months prior to the Organizational Meeting, request written nominations of Country Group Officers (Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs) from the Contracting Parties.

11. Contracting Parties should indicate the extent to which the nominated candidates would be willing to stand for alternative positions in the event that they are not selected as per their first choice. The number of candidates nominated by each Contracting Party will be limited to a maximum of four.

12. Annex 1 contains a list of desirable qualifications and experience of the Country Group Officers, and a summary of their duties. Contracting Parties are encouraged to take that information into account when considering nominations.

13. All written nominations, received by the Secretariat, not later than one month prior to the Organizational Meeting will be circulated to all Contracting Parties ahead of the Organizational Meeting.

III.3. Selection of Other Officers

14. During the Organizational Meeting, following the allocation of the Contracting Parties into Country Groups, the Country Groups will meet separately and decide within the Country Group on the nominations for Chairpersons, Vice-Chairperson, Rapporteur and Co-ordinator from within that Country Group.

15. Country Groups should decide by consensus from the nominations, submitted one month ahead of the organizational meeting, for each of the four positions.

16. The consensus decision should consider to the extent practicable, geographical distribution and gender diversity. The suggested number of selected officers per Contracting party should in general not exceed two.

17. In the unlikely event that there are no nominations for a post, the post shall remain vacant and shall be reported as being vacant to the plenary.

18. The remaining un-appointed nominations shall be placed on a separate reserve list applicable to each of the 4 posts (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Co-ordinator and Rapporteur). The reserve lists shall be coordinated and managed by the Secretariat. Candidates will be allocated to the reserve lists based on the nominations made as per Paragraph 11 above.

19. On return to Plenary the nominated officers (including vacancies) will be rotated starting with the nominated Chairpersons, then Vice-Chairpersons, Co-ordinators and finally Rapporteurs. The rotation in each case will be effected by the President drawing a random number not exceeding the number of Country Groups less one (1).

20. Following the rotation of appointed officers, each Country Group shall be reviewed in turn starting with Country Group 1, to identify existing vacancies.
21. Where a vacancy exists, this vacancy shall be filled by the President drawing a random number representing the names of the remaining un-appointed nominations on the reserve list for the respective role.
22. The vacancies will be filled in the following order of priority –
 - (a) Chairpersons,
 - (b) Vice-Chairpersons
 - (c) Co-ordinators
 - (d) Rapporteurs
23. In the event that a nominee is from the Country Group in question, the said nominee is ineligible for consideration in the case of that vacancy.
24. In the case where there is a vacancy and no further eligible nominations exist on the reserve list for a particular position, then additional nominations may be called for from the Contracting Parties during the plenary.
25. The additional nominations received will be used to reconstitute the reserve list for said position.

III.4. Additional Considerations

26. Following the Organizational Meeting, a workshop of incoming and outgoing officers shall be held to describe the Review Meeting process in detail, including but not limited to key documents, identification of Good Practices and to share experience and lessons learned. The National Contacts, as described in Annex 1, shall be invited to participate, if they consider it appropriate, in this meeting.

IV. Structure of Review Meeting

27. Review Meetings are expected to have a duration of two weeks. During the Meeting, Contracting Parties will meet in pre-assigned Country Groups in order to review National Reports in detail. In addition to these Country Group sessions, there will be plenary sessions, and depending on the need, other meetings of various types.

IV.1. Opening Plenary Session

28. At a short opening session in plenary, procedural matters will be addressed. National statements, if any, will be accepted in writing only.

IV.2. Closing Plenary Session

29. (a) One day prior to the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting, the Rapporteur for each Country Group will make available to all Contracting Parties a Rapporteur's written report that takes account of the views expressed in the discussion on each National Report in that group, includes Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions, Challenges (see Annex 2) and points of agreement and disagreement, and summarizes the overarching issues identified by that Country Group;

(b) One day prior to the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting, the President will make available to all Contracting Parties a written report on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups, including the basis on which they were found by the Country Groups to meet all the elements of a Good Practice;

(c) In the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting:

- i. for each Country Group in turn, the relevant group Rapporteur will make a brief and concise oral report that summarizes the overarching issues identified by the group and draws out these issues for discussion in the plenary session;
- ii. each Contracting Party will have an opportunity to respond to the questions raised and/or comments made on its National Report;
- iii. there will be an opportunity for all Contracting Parties to comment on any National Report and on the Rapporteurs' written and oral reports;
- ~~iii.~~iv. the President will make a brief and concise oral report to Contracting Parties that introduces the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups and the basis on which they were found by the Country Groups to satisfy all the elements of a Good Practice;
- ~~iv.~~v. there will be a thorough and candid discussion of the overarching issues identified in the Country Group Rapporteurs' written and oral reports; this should be followed by a discussion of the status of world-wide safety of spent fuel management and world-wide safety of radioactive waste management;
- ~~v.~~vi. suggestions concerning changes to any of the Convention's documents or procedures will be discussed;
- ~~vi.~~vii. the date for the following Review Meeting, and the related schedule of deadlines, will be discussed and agreed;
- ~~vii.~~viii. the meeting summary report will be discussed and approved by consensus of the Contracting Parties; and
- ~~viii.~~ix. the President's report will be tabled.

30. Contracting Parties should note that the closing plenary session has an uncertain duration. It can continue well past the normal time at which meetings end, due to the need for consensus on the meeting summary report. Delegates are therefore advised to avoid travel commitments on the final day of a Review Meeting.

IV.3. Intermediate Plenary Sessions

31. Plenary sessions may be held at the call of the President at any time during a Review Meeting.

IV.4. Country Group Sessions

32. These sessions will be conducted in the manner described in Sections VI and VII.

IV.5. Open-ended Working Group Sessions

33. Contracting Parties in plenary session can decide to create one or more open-ended working groups to meet during a Review Meeting. As the name suggests, any Contracting Party can attend any meeting

of an open-ended working group. The tasks assigned to the group should be documented. The purpose of such groups is to allow discussion and resolution of procedural and other issues relevant to the functioning of the Convention prior to their consideration by a plenary session. Open-ended working group sessions should be scheduled so as to not conflict with plenary sessions and Country Group sessions.

V. Assignment of the Contracting Parties to Country Groups

34. The mechanism for establishing Country Groups is herein set out:

- (a) The membership of Country Groups should not be such as to represent particular geographical areas;
- (b) the number of groups for a particular Review Meeting will be decided at the corresponding Organizational Meeting, taking into account the number of the Contracting Parties;
- (c) in order to achieve sufficient breadth of experience to promote both effective and efficient discussion, each group should contain approximately equal numbers of the Contracting Parties with experience of the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste associated with nuclear power plants;
- (d) the means adopted for ensuring this is to rank Contracting Parties by the number of their nuclear power reactors that have achieved criticality, including those that are being decommissioned and those that have completed decommissioning in accordance with the definition in the Convention, and within that, alphabetically in English. These Contracting Parties shall be categorized as “Power Reactor Contracting Parties”. The “Power Reactor Contracting Parties” shall then be subcategorized into “Power Reactor Group A” and “Power Reactor Group B”. The “Power Reactor Group A” subcategory shall consist of the first half of the ranked “Power Reactor Contracting Parties”, i.e., half of the “Power Reactor Contracting Parties” that have the highest number of nuclear reactors. The “Power Reactor Group B” subcategory shall consist of the second half of the ranked “Power Reactor Contracting Parties”, i.e., half of the “Power Reactor Contracting Parties” that have the lowest number of nuclear reactors. Where the number of “Power Reactor Contracting Parties” is odd, the “Power Reactor Group A” subcategory shall contain one more Contracting Party than the “Power Reactor Group B” subcategory. The “Power Reactor Group A” Contracting Parties will be randomly assigned into Country Groups starting with the first row of Country Group 1, moving left to right, and then the second row of Country Group 1, moving left to right, continuing to work through all the “Power Reactor Group A” Contracting Parties until exhausted. The process will then continue but with the “Power Reactor Group B” subcategory. To be randomly assigned, all Contracting Parties’ country names in the category that is being assigned shall be placed in a hat and drawn at random, until exhausted, by the President. Assigned country names will not be returned to the hat.
- (e) Contracting Parties that do not have nuclear power reactors, but that have research reactors that have achieved criticality including those that are being decommissioned and those that have completed decommissioning in accordance with the definition in the Convention shall be categorized as “Research Reactor Contracting Parties”. The distribution of “Research Reactor Contracting Parties” shall be made on an alphabetical basis, continuing the process from where it stopped for the Contracting Parties referred to in paragraph 34 (d). This should start with a randomly selected letter and then the use of the first letter of each Contracting Party’s country name, spelt in English.
- (f) All other Contracting Parties shall be categorized as “All other Contracting Parties”. The distribution of “All other Contracting Parties” shall be made on an alphabetical basis, continuing the process from where it stopped for the Contracting Parties referred to in paragraph 34 (e). This should start with a randomly selected letter and then the use of the first

letter of each Contracting Party's country name, spelt in English.

35. States or regional organizations of an integration or other nature which ratify the Convention after an Organizational Meeting but at least 90 days before the associated Review Meeting are obliged to join in the review process with other Contracting Parties. Such Contracting Parties should be added to existing Country Groups in sequential order of date of ratification, continuing the process from where it stopped under para. 35.

36. Under the terms of Article 40(2), States or regional organizations of an integration or other nature which ratify later than 90 days before the date fixed for a Review Meeting (late ratifiers) will not become Contracting Parties until after that Review Meeting has begun. However they may, upon a consensus decision of the Contracting Parties, participate at the Review Meeting. To facilitate such participation, the President of the Review Meeting shall circulate to all Contracting Parties the proposal for the late ratifier to participate and seek their views thereon. If no Contracting Party objects, the late ratifier may be granted full participation rights in the Review Meeting. National Reports produced by late ratifiers will be distributed as soon as possible by the Secretariat to all Contracting Parties. Such Contracting Parties should be added to existing Country Groups in sequential order of date of ratification, continuing the process from where it stopped under para. 34 (e).

37. Table 2 shows the process of such an allocation to Country Groups if there were eight groups and Table 3 shows an example of the outcome of the process.

VI. The Country Group Review Process

38. As provided for in Article 30(3) of the Convention, each Contracting Party shall have a reasonable opportunity to discuss the National Reports of any other Contracting Party. In the period up to three months before each Review Meeting, all Contracting Parties may submit questions and/or comments on individual National Reports. These questions and/or comments and the responses to them should be distributed to all Contracting Parties (see Section IX).

39. In order to facilitate the review process, Contracting Parties attending a Review Meeting are assigned to Country Groups (see Section V). The purpose of the Country Group sessions is to review together the National Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group. In order to attain the objectives of the Convention, this review should be thorough and conducted by the Contracting Parties who are Country Group members in a constructive manner and should promote robust and candid discussions in order to identify Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions, Challenges and other issues that may be an overarching issue that is important to improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management.

40. Country Group sessions should be scheduled so as to not conflict with plenary sessions.

41. While any Contracting Party may attend any Country Group session, and participate in the peer review as resources permit, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide the Secretariat at the latest two weeks before each Review Meeting with a list of which Country Group sessions they intend to attend, in order to allow the Secretariat to make the appropriate meeting space and logistical arrangements. A Contracting Party is expected to participate in all reviews carried out by the Country Group of which it is a member.

42. Attendance of Country Group sessions by Contracting Parties who are not members of the Country Group is voluntary. During discussions in the Country Group questions, comments or other interventions from Country Group members will be given priority. Time permitting, questions, comments or other

interventions from Contracting Parties who are not members of the Country Group will be considered.

43. Contracting Parties should provide a leading role for their regulatory bodies in their delegations attending Country Group sessions.

44. Each Country Group shall allow an appropriate amount of time, not exceeding four hours, for the presentation and discussion of each National Report and the finalisation of the rapporteur's daily report on the session. The total time available for group sessions will have been decided at the Organizational Meeting.

45. A major objective of the review session should be to identify any Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions, Challenges or other issues that may be an overarching issue that should be highlighted as important to improving safety. The time allocation for each part of a Country Group session is set out in para. 61(d). The Country Group Rapporteur should present to the participants a draft session report that summarizes the National Presentation and the related discussions. The Rapporteur should then finalize the draft session report based upon the agreement of the Country Group members. This report should identify Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions, Challenges, and other important issues including areas of agreement and disagreement.

46. The Rapporteurs' session reports should be provided to the Review Meeting President and to the Secretariat within half a day of the end of the relevant Country Group session to facilitate preparation of the overall Review Meeting summary report.

47. This process should be repeated for each National Report.

48. The Country Group members should discuss and agree on the content of the written report to be presented to the Contracting Parties by the Country Group's Rapporteur. In general, the written report should be a consolidation of the various session reports for that Country Group plus a summary of the overarching issues identified by the Country Group.

49. The Secretariat will store the Rapporteurs' session report confidentially. During the meeting of officers immediately preceding the start of the next Review Meeting, a copy of the session report for each Contracting Party will be given to all officers of the Country Group.

VII. Duties of a Contracting Party as a Member of a Country Group

50. Article 33 of the Convention requires Contracting Parties to attend meetings of the Parties. Attendance at Review Meetings is therefore obligatory. The purpose of Review Meetings is to review National Reports. This review is carried out in Country Groups. It therefore follows that an important obligation on each Contracting Party is to participate fully in its Country Group.

51. Each Contracting Party thus has two sets of duties, one being to undergo a review by Contracting Parties, and the other being to review the reports of other members of the Country Group to which it has been assigned.

52. As a member of a Country Group, a Contracting Party should:

- (a) study in detail the National Reports of all other members of its group bearing in mind the terms Suggestion, Area of Good Performance, and Good Practice, as described in Annex 2, and considering their applicability to the practices, policies, and programs discussed in a Contracting Party's National Report;

- (b) inform other Contracting Parties in the Country Group, both directly through the identified National Contacts, and through the relevant group Co-ordinator, of any questions and comments arising from its review of the National Reports; and
 - (c) during Country Group sessions, participate in an in-depth discussion of the National Report of each member of the group.
53. In relation to undergoing a review by other Contracting Parties, a Contracting Party should:
- (a) prepare a detailed report as required by Article 32 of the Convention;
 - (b) provide answers to the written questions and comments of other Contracting Parties on its National Report;
 - (c) prepare and provide to its Country Group during the Review Meeting a presentation based on its National Report and the ensuing questions and comments;
 - (d) provide a copy of the presentation to the Country Group Chair by noon the day before the presentation is scheduled, so that it may be distributed to the Country Group officers and Country Group members before the close of business; and
 - (e) arrive in the Country Group meeting room 15 minutes before the presentation to review logistics with the Country Group Chair.

VIII. Guidance to Officers on how to Conduct a Country Group Session

54. The objective of the sessions of a Country Group during a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention is to review the National Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group. As stated in para. 39, this review should be comprehensive, constructive, and open. The officers for each Country Group play a crucial role in determining how well the Country Group achieves this objective.

55. The officers of a Country Group are the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the Co-ordinator, and the Rapporteur. These will all have been selected at the Organizational Meeting held before the Review Meeting.

56. During the interim period between the Organizational Meeting and the Review Meeting, the National Reports will have been distributed, and written questions, comments, and responses generated. The Co-ordinator receives National Reports, questions, comments and answers for his/her Country Group, and will produce an analysis of the material and identify any trends before the start of the Review Meeting. Before the start of the Review Meeting,

- (a) the Co-ordinator will produce a Co-ordinator's report that contains a summary and an analysis of this information, as well as an identification of any trends.
- (b) a copy of the Co-ordinator's report, specific to the Country Group, will be sent, confidentially, to the other officers and all Contracting Parties who are members of the Country Group. At the end of the Review Meeting, the Secretariat will upload the Co-ordinator's report for each Country Group on the Joint Convention secure website.

57. Each Country Group officer should become familiar with the National Reports from Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group, and the Co-ordinator's report, before arriving for the

Review Meeting.

58. Review Meeting officers should convene, together with the Secretariat staff members who will be participating in the Review Meeting, for two days immediately preceding the start of the Review Meeting. On the first of these two days, agreement should be reached on subjects such as the structure and content of the Rapporteurs' session reports, the application of the terms Good Practice and Area of Good Performance as described in Annex 2, the timing of sessions, how the General Committee will interact with Country Groups, how Country Group Chairs will report the Good Practices recognized by their respective Country Groups to the General Committee, how the General Committee will report to Contracting Parties at the closing plenary session on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Groups, the format of Rapporteurs' written and oral reports to the closing plenary session, etc. The second day should be devoted to separate meetings of each set of Country Group officers, together with the Secretariat member who will be assisting the group. During these meetings, each group of officers should discuss the Co-ordinator's analysis in some detail, since this analysis identifies and summarizes the questions and comments on each Convention article, and the main issues emerging from those. The officers will also receive copies of the Rapporteurs' written reports from the previous Review Meeting, for the Contracting Parties that are in the Country Group. These written reports should be studied for any item on which follow-up was recommended. The officers should also discuss their intended method of operation during the Review Meeting.

59. In preparing for a Country Group session, the Chairperson of the country group should prepare an abbreviated version of the Co-ordinator's report, listing individual points under each of the reporting headings. Prior to the start of the Country Group session, the group's officers should each have a copy of this abbreviated listing.

60. (a) During the presentation and subsequent discussion in the Country Group, the officers should use the abbreviated listing as a checklist for items to be discussed. If any item has not been mentioned, the Chairperson should make a point of raising it before closing the session.

- (b) The Chairperson should also endeavor to facilitate robust and candid discussion in the Country Group regarding any proposed Good Practice, including (1) encouraging a candid and thorough discussion among the Country Group members regarding how a proposed Good Practice satisfies all the elements of a Good Practice, and (2) determining for each proposed Good Practice that there is support within the Country Group.

(c) If necessary, the Chairperson should proactively encourage each member of the Country Group to participate in the discussion, especially of difficult items. By following this systematic approach, the Chairperson can ensure that the Country Group deals comprehensively with each National Report and presentation, and by use of teamwork, the workload involved can be distributed in a reasonable way between the officers of the Country Group.

61. The essence of the recommended approach is:

- (a) thorough preparation by the Chairperson, so that the Chairperson is familiar with the issues that are likely to be relevant, in advance of the Country Group session. The Co-ordinator's report is the obvious starting point for the detailed preparation;
- (b) that all officers of the Country Group should also be familiar with the issues so that they can be effective team members during the Country Group sessions;
- (c) that officers should remember that they have a duty to encourage a full discussion and optimum dialogue after each national presentation;

- (d) that the Chairperson should manage the time available for considering each National Report to ensure the Country Group optimizes the time for discussion within the allowed time period for the session and to promote a robust and candid discussion in order to identify Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance Suggestions, Challenges and other issues that are important to improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. The available time for the review session is up to one-quarter for the presentation, one-third for the preparation of and agreement on the Rapporteur's session report, and the remainder for discussion including an overview of written questions and answers; and
- (e) that officers should be available to assist the Rapporteurs, as needed, in the preparation of the session report from each Country Group, and the Rapporteurs written and oral reports to plenary. In order to achieve this, the Chairperson should be alert to the possible need to allow the Rapporteur to leave the session temporarily to write up a particularly complex or controversial part of the report while it is still fresh in the Rapporteur's mind. In such instances, it is suggested that the Vice-Chairperson temporarily assumes the role of the Rapporteur.

IX. Distribution of National Reports and Subsequent Actions

62. Not later than seven months before each Review Meeting, each Contracting Party should submit its National Report under Article 32 of the Convention to the Secretariat of the Review Meeting, for circulation to all Contracting Parties and to the observers invited under Article 33(2) of the Convention. The National Report should be submitted electronically, to the Joint Convention secure website, as a single PDF format file. The submission of hard copies of National Reports is discouraged.

63. States or regional organizations of an integration or other nature which ratify the Convention after an Organizational Meeting but at least 90 days before the associated Review Meeting are required to submit as soon as possible, and in any event not later than 90 days before the Review Meeting, a National Report under Article 32 of the Convention and are entitled to receive the National Reports of other Contracting Parties.

64. Each Contracting Party should then review the National Reports of the Contracting Parties in their Country Group in detail, and the National Reports of other Contracting Parties to the extent desired.

65. Questions and comments on a National Report of a Contracting Party should be submitted electronically on the Joint Convention secure website at least three months before each Review Meeting, unless otherwise decided by the Contracting Parties.

66. The Contracting Party receiving questions and comments on their National Report should submit responses thereto electronically on the Joint Convention secure website not later than one month before a Review Meeting, unless otherwise decided by the Contracting Parties. In this way each Contracting Party will be aware of all the issues raised and the associated responses on each National Report before the Review Meeting.

67. The submission of National Reports, questions or comments on National Reports, as well as responses to questions and comments on National Reports on the Joint Convention secure website should be undertaken by the National Contact for the Contracting Party concerned. Contracting Parties may elect to use batch uploading when appropriate. The Contracting Party's National Contact is responsible to ensure that questions posed on National Reports of other Contracting Parties and responses to questions posed or comments raised on their National Reports are complete and uploaded in a timely manner.

68. If a Contracting Party submits questions and comments late in the process (in light of the dates agreed for such submissions), those questions and comments should not be entertained unless the recipient Contracting Party and relevant Country Group Chairperson agree.

69. The Secretariat will make publicly available each National Report, as uploaded to the Joint Convention secure website, within 90 days after the Review Meeting unless the Contracting Party concerned notifies the Secretariat otherwise.

X. Summary Report

70. As provided for in Article 34 of the Convention, a summary report is required to be published at the end of each Review Meeting. The President should prepare this and submit it to the closing plenary session for adoption by consensus by the Contracting Parties. The summary report is for public distribution and should be concise and clear. It should summarize major issues, possibly by combining significant points made in the Rapporteurs' written and oral reports that summarized the Country Group discussions. It should not identify any particular Contracting Party by name except as specified below; but should highlight the overarching issues identified by the Contracting Parties. It should also make recommendations as appropriate for the future. The summary report will identify any Contracting Parties that did not submit National Reports or attend the Review Meeting. The President should also prepare a "President's Report". This should summarize the main findings of the meeting and contain other information useful to the Secretariat such as appropriate logistical comments or suggestions, details of any modifications to supporting documents approved by the Review Meeting, and other similar material. This report should be presented to the Contracting Parties for consideration; but is not intended to be a public document.

Table 1: Time Chart *

Organizational Meeting	Deadline for Submission of National Reports	Deadline for Submission of Questions and Comments	Deadline for Submission of Answers	Deadline for Notification of Participation in Country Groups	Officers' Meeting	Start of Review Meeting
– 12 months	– 7 months	– 3 months	– 1 month	– 2 weeks	– 2 days	0 day
Rule 11.1. in the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules	Rule 38 in the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules	Paras. 38 & 65 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Paras. 53 (c) & 65 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Para 41 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Para 58 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Article 30 of the Convention

* The time shown in this chart are approximate. The exact deadlines and timing of events will be determined in accordance with the Convention, the relevant rules and guidelines, as well as any relevant practice.

Table 2: Country Group Allocation Process

CG 1	CG 2	CG 3	CG 4	CG 5	CG 6	CG 7	CG 8
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	o
o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
o	o	o	o	o	Δ	Δ	Δ
Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ
Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ
Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ
Δ	Δ	Δ					

x: Power Reactors Group A – half of the Power Reactor Contracting Parties (highest numbers of nuclear reactors) [randomly assigned]
x: Power Reactors Group B – half of the Power Reactor Contracting Parties (lowest numbers of nuclear reactors) [randomly assigned]
o: Research Reactor Contracting Parties alphabetically assigned starting with a random letter
Δ: All other Contracting Parties alphabetically assigned starting with a random letter

Table 3: Country Group Allocation Example

CG 1	CG 2	CG 3	CG 4	CG 5	CG 6	CG 7	CG 8
United Kingdom	Slovakia	Sweden	China	Germany	Belgium	Ukraine	Czech Republic
United States of America	France	Korea, Republic of	Canada	Russian Federation	Spain	Bulgaria	Japan
Netherlands	Armenia	Switzerland	United Arab Emirates	Finland	Slovenia	Italy	South Africa
Hungary	Mexico	Kazakhstan	Romania	Brazil	Argentina	Lithuania	Jordan
Latvia	Morocco	Nigeria	Norway	Peru	Poland	Portugal	Serbia
Thailand	Uruguay	Uzbekistan	Vietnam	Australia	Austria	Belarus	Chile
Denmark	Georgia	Ghana	Greece	Indonesia	Kyrgyzstan	Lesotho	Luxembourg
Madagascar	Malta	Mauritania	Mauritius	Montenegro	Niger	North Macedonia	Oman
Paraguay	Republic of Moldova	Saudi Arabia	Senegal	Tajikistan	Albania	Benin	Bolivia
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Botswana	Croatia	Cuba	Cyprus	Eritrea	Estonia	EURATOM
Gabon	Iceland	Ireland					

Footnote: This table is provided only for illustrative purposes. It does not reflect the latest status of Contracting Parties.

ANNEX 1

Duties and Qualifications of Officers for a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention

I. Background

As a result of experience at the First Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 3–14 November 2003, the following guidelines were developed which reflect the duties and qualifications of officers of a Review Meeting. The list, although not exclusive, identifies the major duties and essential qualifications of these officers.

II. Duties of Officers

II.1. President

- (a) To preside over plenary sessions of the Review Meeting;
- ~~(b)~~ To preside over meetings of the General Committee;
- ~~(b)~~~~(c)~~ To produce and make available to the Contracting Parties a written report that consolidates the Good Practices recognized in the Country Groups and identifies the basis on which they were found by the Country Groups to meet all the elements of a Good Practice, and to present an oral report in the closing plenary session that summarizes the written report;
- ~~(e)~~~~(d)~~ To generally direct and oversee the review process, and the functioning of the Review Meeting;
- ~~(d)~~~~(e)~~ To represent the Review Meeting to the media as appropriate;
- ~~(e)~~~~(f)~~ To prepare a draft summary report of the Review Meeting and a President's report on the Review Meeting; and
- ~~(f)~~~~(g)~~ To direct the business of the General Committee in the period after the Review Meeting until the following Organizational Meeting.

II.2. Vice-President

- (a) To act as the President of the Review Meeting, if necessary;
- (b) To participate in meetings of the General Committee;
- (c) To assist the President, as appropriate; and
- (d) To chair meetings of open-ended groups established by the plenary sessions if so decided by the Contracting Parties at the plenary session.

II.3. Country Group Chair

- (a) To chair and generally manage the meetings of a Country Group;
- (b) To promote and stimulate discussion of relevant issues in the Country Group meeting;

- (c) To study the National Reports of his/her Country Group, in advance of their presentation;
- (d) To be familiar with the main issues arising from the questions and answers on each of the National Reports to be considered in his/her Country Group;
- (e) To support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Rapporteur's reports;
- (f) To participate in meetings of the General Committee;
- (g) To implement in his/her Country Group the decisions of the General Committee; and
- (h) To report to the General Committee on the progress in the Country Group, on the Good Practices recognized by the Country Group including the basis on which each one was found to satisfy all the elements of a Good Practice, and on any organizational issues arising in connection with the Country Group ~~therewith~~.

II.4. Country Vice-Chair

- (a) To act as the Country Group Chair, if necessary;
- (b) To support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Rapporteur's reports; and
- (c) To act as Rapporteur if necessary during Country Group discussion, for example to allow the Rapporteur to leave the Country Group temporarily in order to capture promptly in written form the outcome of complex discussions or in the absence, otherwise, of the Rapporteur.

II.5. Rapporteur

- (a) To be familiar with the National Reports to be presented in his/her Country Group and the relevant Co-ordinator's report;
- (b) To record the essentials of the discussion of each of the National Reports in his/her Country Group sessions;
- ~~(c)~~ To identify topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be ~~Good Practices~~, Areas of Good Performance, Suggestions and Challenges;
- ~~(e)~~(d) To identify practices, policies, and programs that are agreed by the Country Group to be Good Practices and the specific reasons that demonstrate how such practices, policies, and programs satisfy all of the elements of a Good Practice;
- ~~(d)~~(e) To highlight topics and issues that may be identified by the Country Group as overarching issues;
- ~~(e)~~(f) To identify topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be areas where follow-up at a subsequent Review Meeting would be desirable;
- ~~(f)~~(g) To produce a draft session report after each national presentation, summarizing the above items;
- ~~(g)~~(h) To revise the draft session report after discussions in the Country Group and to provide the resulting session report to the Review Meeting President and to the Secretariat within one half day of the close of the session;
- ~~(h)~~(i) To produce and ~~present~~ make available to the Contracting Parties, a written report that consolidates the session reports for each National Report presented in the Country Group, and represents a summary of the discussions that took place in the Country Group during the

Review Meeting, any decisions reached by the Country Group including any Good Practices recognized by the Contracting Parties and the bases thereof, including the any conclusions, and as well as a summary of the overarching issues identified by the Country Group, and to present an oral report in the plenary that summarizes the overarching issues; and

- (i) To produce the above reports in accordance with the format, timing, and other details as directed by the General Committee.

II.6. Co-ordinator

- (a) To undertake follow-up with the National Contacts for his/her Country Group, to monitor that Contracting Parties in his/her Country Group adhere to prescribed timetables and agreed formats for submission of National Reports posting of questions and comments and posting of responses to questions and comments received.
- (b) To review National Reports, questions, comments and answers related to Contracting Parties in his/ her Country Group.
- (c) To develop a Co-ordinator's report that contains a summary and an analysis of National Reports, questions, comments and answers for his/her Country Group, as well as an identification of any trends.
- (d) The Co-ordinator's report is intended to aid discussions during the Country Group sessions. As such it needs to be provided before the start of the Review Meeting.

II.7. National Contacts

National Contacts will be nominated by each Contracting Party and will be expected:

- (a) To have access to and regularly monitor the Joint Convention secure website, together with the right to upload national documents, questions, and answers;
- (b) To ensure that questions posed on National Reports of other Contracting Parties and responses to questions posed or comments raised on their National Reports are complete and uploaded in a timely manner.
- (c) To facilitate progress on issues related to the Convention in their own Contracting Party;
- (d) To act as contact for the Country Group Co-ordinator prior to each Review Meeting; and
- (e) To consider participating in the one-day meeting of incoming and outgoing Officers of the Joint Convention.

III. Qualifications of Officers

Note

In general, it is desirable that a candidate for an officer position has experience in the Convention, and especially in a previous Review Meeting of the Convention, although such experience need not have been as an officer.

III.1. President

- (a) Have experience in chairing large international meetings;

- (b) Be available for:
 - (i) the Organizational Meeting in advance of the Review Meeting,
 - (ii) the duration of the Review Meeting, and
 - (iii) occasional meetings during a period of three years after the Review Meeting;
- (c) Be knowledgeable, either first hand or by being well briefed, on the Joint Convention and its processes, and on some of the major current issues in the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management; and
- (d) Be skilled at facilitating consensus.

III.2. Vice-President

- (a) Same qualifications as in item III.1 for President.

III.3. Country Group Chair

- (a) Have a demonstrated aptitude for encouraging the discussion of issues;
- (b) Have a good command of the English language;
- (c) Be a good communicator;
- (d) Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting; and
- (e) Have no vested interests, either personal or national, in countries in his/her Country Group.

III.4. Country Group Vice-Chair

- (a) Same qualifications as in item III.3 for Country Group Chair.

III.5. Rapporteur

- (a) Be able to summarize in writing succinctly and rapidly;
- (b) Have a good command of the English language;
- (c) Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting;
- (d) Have no vested interests, either personal or national, in countries in his/her Country Group; and
- (e) Have knowledge of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management issues.

III.6. Co-ordinator

- (a) Be able to extract, from a large volume of documentation, key issues that should be discussed at his/her Country Group sessions, and to advise his/her Country Group Chairperson accordingly in advance of the Review Meeting;
- (b) Be available for extensive work periods for some months before the Review Meeting;
- (c) Have knowledge of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management issues;

- (d) Be familiar with electronic database manipulation; and
- (e) Have access and ability to download and upload files on the Internet.

III.7. National Contacts

It is desirable that National Contacts possess the following qualities:

- (a) Be available for contact and work between the Review Meetings;
- (b) Have a knowledge of spent fuel and radioactive waste safety issues;
- (c) Be familiar with electronic database management; and
- (d) Have good English-language skills.

ANNEX 2

Common Understanding of the Terms “Good Practice”, “Area of Good Performance”, “Suggestion”, and “Challenge”

I. Good Practice

A Good Practice is a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs.

II. Area of Good Performance

An Area of Good Performance is a new or enhanced practice, policy or programme for a Contracting Party that is recognized as an improvement of safety and is being implemented. An Area of Good Performance is a significant accomplishment for that Contracting Party, although it may have been undertaken by other Contracting Parties.

III. Suggestion

A Suggestion refers to an area for improvement. It is an action needed to improve the implementation of the obligations of the Convention.

IV. Challenge

A Challenge is a difficult issue for the Contracting Party. It may be a demanding undertaking (beyond day-to-day activities); or a weakness that needs to be remediated.

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Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports

1. The “Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports” adopted at the Preparatory Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention held from 10 to 12 December 2001 were modified at
 - (i) the Second Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 15 to 24 May 2006,
 - (ii) the Fourth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 14 to 23 May 2012,
 - (iii) the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 12 to 13 May 2014, and
 - (iv) the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties held from 27 June to 8 July 2022.
2. The modified “Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports” are set forth in the Attachment hereto.

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports

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Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

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I. Introduction

1. These Guidelines, established by the Contracting Parties under Article 29 of the Convention, are intended to be read in conjunction with the text of the Convention. Their purpose is to provide guidance to the Contracting Parties on material that should be included in the National Reports required by Article 32 and thereby to facilitate the most efficient review of the implementation by the Contracting Parties of their obligations under the Convention.

II. General

2. The basic concept of the Convention is the obligation of the Contracting Parties to apply widely recognized principles and tools for high-quality safety management and to submit National Reports on the implementation of these principles and tools to peer reviews with international participation. In accordance with Article 1 of the Convention, the National Reports should illustrate how the objectives of the Convention, especially a high level of safety in spent fuel and radioactive waste management, have been achieved.

3. The following matters should be taken into account in preparing reports:

- (a) each Contracting Party may submit a report of length and structure it believes necessary in order to describe the measures taken to implement its obligations under the Convention;
- (b) the need for effective and efficient review and to aid comparison, makes it desirable that reports be of a similar structure and format. Guidance on the recommended structure and format is provided in Section III;
- (c) a flexible approach can be adopted to the writing of reports, provided that the report strikes a balance between being sufficiently comprehensive to permit genuine evaluation of the extent of implementation of each obligation and being sufficiently concise to make both writing and reviewing the report practicable;
- (d) the first report may need to include more comprehensive information on the Contracting Party's spent fuel and radioactive waste management policy and practices than subsequent reports. Some of the information in the first report can be updated or supplemented as necessary for subsequent Review Meetings, instead of being repeated;
- (e) the National Report of a Contracting Party at subsequent Meetings should contain updated information on matters covered in the first report, noting significant changes in applicable national laws, regulations and practices. It should also address safety issues which have been identified in the Contracting Party's previous report or which have arisen since the completion of the previous report. In particular, it should address progress in safety analysis and improvement programmes. Finally, it should respond to any recommendations adopted at plenary sessions of the previous Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties; and
- (f) information on plans, methods, procedures etc. relating to spent fuel and radioactive waste management can be provided in a generic manner; however, a significant safety issue encountered in a particular situation or in respect of a particular facility should be described in a specific manner.

4. Each report should, as appropriate:
 - (a) address all aspects of the obligations under the Convention;
 - (b) combine the article-by-article approach, following the subject matters of the Convention, with general sections, paying due regard to the concept of safety as a whole;
 - (c) clearly distinguish between requirements laid down in national regulations (formal compliance) and the status of the implementation of these requirements (factual compliance);
 - (d) avoid duplication both within the report and between the report and reports prepared for previous Review Meetings under this Convention;
 - (e) discuss the safety of spent fuel management and of radioactive waste management through the presentation of aggregated data and generic analyses showing overall trends of safety significance and - where appropriate - illustrated by the specific discussion of particular safety-related issues encountered at individual facilities;
 - (f) include other official national reports and reports on national and international reviews requested by the Contracting Party as annexes; and
 - (g) highlight the significant changes from the previous National Report.
5. National Reports should focus on describing by which specific measures the Contracting Party is implementing which specific article of the Convention; therefore, except for the general sections all information contained in National Reports should be explicitly connected to a specific Convention article.
6. Although the practice of supplementing National Reports with a number of annexed documents is encouraged, the main body of the National Report itself should contain all key elements of information needed to assess in what way the Contracting Party concerned is trying to attain Convention objectives.
7. The ratio between the length of a National Report and the amount of data supplied in annexes should not exceed a limit beyond which the transparency of the information provided could be compromised; a report/annexes ratio of roughly 1/3 would seem recommendable in this respect.
8. The number of pages of a National Report should not exceed a reasonable amount.
9. Contracting Parties are encouraged to report in *Système International* (SI) units.
10. Each National Report should include an overview matrix to be used by the Rapporteur during the Country Group review. The format and definitions having been agreed on by the Contracting Parties.

III. Suggested Form and Structure of the National Report

11. It is suggested that National Reports follow the structure set out below. For each of the sections identified in the following paragraphs, the relevant articles of the Convention are listed, and suggestions are made regarding some of the issues which may be addressed. In each section, the following information should be provided, as appropriate:
 - (a) a statement on the implementation of each article, including a description of the situation addressed in the section and the results achieved;
 - (b) plans and measures needed for corrective actions, with an indication of any necessary international cooperation, as required;
 - (c) explanations of terms used in the report, such as those associated with waste classification

schemes; and

- (d) references to annexes or other material, as appropriate.

12. To determine the precise obligations, reference should be made to the text of the Convention for every article referred to in each section.

13. The IAEA Safety Standards, in particular Safety Fundamentals and Requirements, provide a basis for what constitutes a high level of safety and are objective, transparent and technologically neutral, which gives valuable guidance on how to meet the obligations of the Convention. Reference to the IAEA Safety Fundamentals and Requirements could be made when reporting on the obligations under the Convention.

Section A. Introduction

14. This section should consist of general introductory remarks, a survey of the main safety issues and main themes of the report and references to any matters not covered elsewhere in the report that the Contracting Party wishes to raise. This section should also include a brief summary of matters discussed in Section K, such as Suggestions, Challenges, Areas of Good Performance, and proposed Good Practices.

Section B. Policies and Practices

15. This section covers the obligations under **Article 32 (Reporting), paragraph 1.**

16. It should include a statement outlining the national policy for spent fuel management and a description of national practices pertaining to spent fuel management, together with a statement outlining the national policy for radioactive waste management and a description of national practices pertaining to radioactive waste management. It should also specify the criteria used to define and categorize radioactive waste.

Section C. Scope of Application

17. This section covers the obligations under **Article 3 (Scope of application).**

18. In this section, the position of the Contracting Party as regards the following matters should be stated clearly:

- (a) whether the Contracting Party has declared reprocessing to be part of spent fuel management, pursuant to Article 3(1);
- (b) whether any waste that contains only naturally occurring radioactive material and does not originate from the nuclear fuel cycle has been declared as radioactive waste for the purposes of the Convention, pursuant to Article 3(2), and, if so, where this radioactive waste appears in the inventory; and
- (c) whether any spent fuel or radioactive waste within military or defence programmes has been declared as spent fuel or radioactive waste for the purposes of the Convention, pursuant to Article 3(3).

Section D. Inventories and Lists

19. This section covers the obligations under **Article 32 (Reporting), paragraph 2.**

20. Contracting Parties are encouraged to use clearly defined waste categories when reporting inventories.

Section E. Legislative and Regulatory System

21. This section covers the obligations under the following articles:

Article 18. Implementing measures

Article 19. Legislative and regulatory framework

Article 20. Regulatory body

22. This section should summarize the legislative and regulatory system, including the national safety requirements, the licensing system, the inspection, assessment and enforcement process and the allocation of responsibilities for the safety of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management; the means by which the effective independence of the regulatory functions from those of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management is ensured; and the actions to improve the transparency in regulatory activities and communication with the public. It should also describe the considerations taken into account in deciding whether to regulate radioactive materials as radioactive waste. In the first report, this section should be as comprehensive as possible - to be amended as necessary in subsequent reports.

Section F. Other General Safety Provisions

23. This section covers the obligations under the following articles:

Article 21. Responsibility of the licence holder

Article 22. Human and financial resources

Article 23. Quality assurance

Article 24. Operational radiation protection

Article 25. Emergency preparedness

Article 26. Decommissioning

24. This section should describe the steps taken to implement the obligations regarding general safety provisions set out in this group of articles. It should also describe how the obligations are addressed at the national level and, as appropriate, at the facility level.

Section G. Safety of Spent Fuel Management

25. This section covers the obligations under the following articles:

Article 4. General safety requirements

Article 5. Existing facilities

Article 6. Siting of proposed facilities

Article 7. Design and construction of facilities

Article 8. Assessment of safety of facilities

Article 9. Operation of facilities

Article 10. Disposal of spent fuel

26. This section should give a comprehensive description of the steps taken to protect individuals, society and the environment against radiological hazards associated with spent fuel management. These steps should be described for existing facilities, for proposed facilities and for facilities being brought into operation. The section should concentrate on how the obligations under each article are being addressed. It should be noted that the obligations apply to the management of spent fuel from nuclear power plants and research reactors. Where criteria have been applied in assessing the level of safety or the need for safety improvements, Contracting Parties are encouraged to report those criteria.

Section H. Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

27. This section covers the obligations under the following articles:

Article 11. General safety requirements

Article 12. Existing facilities and past practices

Article 13. Siting of proposed facilities

Article 14. Design and construction of facilities

Article 15. Assessment of safety of facilities

Article 16. Operation of facilities

Article 17. Institutional measures after closure

28. This section should give a comprehensive description of the steps taken to protect individuals, society and the environment against radiological and other hazards associated with radioactive waste management. These steps should be described for existing facilities and past practices, for proposed facilities, for facilities being brought into operation and for disposal facilities that have been closed. The section should concentrate on how the obligations under each relevant article are being addressed. Where criteria have been applied in assessing the level of safety or the need for interventions or safety improvements, Contracting Parties are encouraged to report those criteria.

Section I. Transboundary Movement

29. This section covers the obligations under **Article 27 (Transboundary movement)**.

30. Contracting Parties are encouraged to report here on their experiences concerning transboundary movements.

Section J. Disused Sealed Sources

31. This section covers the obligations under **Article 28 (Disused sealed sources)**.

32. This section should give a comprehensive description of the legislative and regulatory system governing the management of disused sealed sources, including the following issues:

- status of disused sealed sources within the framework of its national legislation;
- national strategy for the management of disused sealed sources, including the legal responsibilities, of manufacturers, suppliers, owners and users of sealed sources for their end-of-life management;
- for Contracting Parties in which suppliers of sealed sources are or were located:
 - the framework concerning the re-entry of disused sealed sources into its territory for

return to a manufacturer qualified to receive and possess the disused sealed sources; and

- the retrieval approach, if any, of sealed sources considered as having a national origin from a foreign state.

Section K. General Efforts to Improve Safety

33. This section provides an opportunity to give a summary of safety issues of concern identified earlier and of planned future actions to address those issues, including, where appropriate, measures of international co-operation.

34. This section should also summarize

- (a) measures taken to address Suggestions and Challenges identified at previous Review Meetings;
~~and~~

- ~~(b)~~ strong features in its current practices, policies, and programs, including Areas of Good Performance that the Contracting Party has identified for itself, possible areas for improvement, major Challenges that the Contracting Party has identified for itself and how the Contracting Party plans to address these issues; ~~and~~ -

- ~~(b)(c)~~ any practice, policy, or program that the Contracting Party proposes for consideration by the Country Group for recognition by the Country Group as a Good Practice and the specific reasons that demonstrate how the practice, policy, or program satisfies all the elements of a Good Practice and qualifies for recognition by the Country Group as a Good Practice.

35. This section should:

- for those countries hosting, having hosted, or planning to host international peer review missions and follow-up missions, include a description of policies, plans and schedules for such peer review missions;
- include the measures taken by the Contracting Party to voluntarily make public the reports on their international peer review missions.

36. This section should include information on the actions taken to enhance openness and transparency in the implementation of the obligations under the Convention.

Section L. Annexes to the National Report

37. The following may be included as annexes to the National Reports:

- (a) List of spent fuel management facilities;
- (b) List of radioactive waste management facilities;
- (c) List of nuclear facilities in the process of being decommissioned;
- (d) Inventory of spent fuel;
- (e) Inventory of radioactive waste;
- (f) References to national laws, regulations, requirements, guides, etc.;
- (g) References to official national and international reports related to safety;
- (h) References to reports on international review missions performed at the request of a

Contracting Party; and

- (i) Other relevant material.

ANNEX

Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports: Practices regarding Publicly Available Information

- (1) The Secretariat will make publicly available each National Report, as uploaded to the Joint Convention secure website, within 90 days after the Review Meeting unless the Contracting Party concerned notifies the Secretariat otherwise.
- (2) To achieve greater transparency in the review process for interested parties, before the Review Meeting, Contracting Parties are encouraged to implement, on a voluntary basis, the following practices:
 - (a) Make public their national reports under Article 32 of the Convention or summaries thereof,
 - (b) Make public the questions and comments received from other Contracting Parties during the review process including the responses to these questions and comments, or summaries thereof, without naming the Contracting Parties that submitted the questions or comments.
- (3) National Reports of the Contracting Parties may also serve as an information source for other purposes, if they are made public by the Contracting Parties. They provide comprehensive information on the safety of spent fuel management and on the safety of radioactive waste management in the State concerned in a clearly arranged manner. Many countries use them for the training of personnel.